

REVIEWS

Genera of the Western Plants. By WADE T. BATSON. 207 p. Published by the author, 1120 Blake Dr., Cayce, South Carolina 29033. \$8.50. (20% discount to bookstores and libraries.)

This is a useful basic guide to the genera of ferns and seed plants of North America west of the 98th meridian and north of Mexico. Also included are a few of the commoner ornamentals of the region. It is clearly aimed at students and amateurs with some familiarity with arcane taxonomese, but plant geographers can also profit from a quick learning of what genera occur west of the 98th meridian, a boundary perhaps no more arbitrary than the Continental Divide. A great deal of information is packed into this pocket-sized volume.

Despite this, the book has a number of serious drawbacks. I would suggest typing the genus names in italics (the book is produced from camera-ready copy) and omitting the synonyms, or at least using the designation "syn.:" to avoid some confusion. I did not use any of the keys but they appear to be typical of this kind of work from a reading of several in families whose members are familiar to me. The key leads are not always parallel, and I suspect some will be hard to use, whereas others will work fine. Each brief genus description is accompanied by a tiny drawing of leaf, flower, or habit. Some of the drawings are too small to be of much value, others will be better than nothing.

Apacheria (Crossosomataceae) and *Dedeckera* (Polygonaceae) are missing, and *Forssellesia* is still included in Celastraceae. *Mollugo*, *Paeonia*, *Menyanthes*, and *Simmondsia* are now usually placed in separate families; *Cephalanthera* (*Eburophyton*), *Ceratoides* (*Eurotia*), *Eremalche* (*Malvastrum*), *Geocaulon* (*Comandra*), *Swallenia* (*Ectosperma*), and *Tiquilia* (*Coldenia*) are the widely accepted segregates or names used in preference over the names in parentheses (used in this book). *Zauschneria* has been submerged into *Epilobium* but is retained here. Missing from the families treated is Proteaceae, surely as worthy of appearance as Myoporaceae and Caricaceae. The range of *Vitis* should be CA-CO, rather than UT-CO. These are a selection of the 33 errors I encountered. I was dismayed by the number of typos and feel that because the book is intended for students, more effort should have been made to eliminate them. In the main text I found 51, and in the index alone, 85. *Pieris* (Ericaceae) has crept into the key for Cichorieae and replaced *Picris*. The student must use this guide with caution.—C. DAVIDSON, Idaho Botanical Garden, P.O. Box 2140, Boise 83701.

A Field Guide to Mushrooms and their Relatives. By COURTENAY BOOTH and HAROLD H. BURDSALL, JR. 144 p., black-and-white drawings, over 400 color photographs. Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., New York, Cincinnati, Toronto, London, Melbourne. 1982. ISBN 0-442-23117-2 (cloth). \$18.95. ISBN 0-442-23118-0 (paper).

Although this book was intended primarily for the northeastern and central United States, it includes many species that occur in the West. It is the only handbook providing color photographs of some of these species. For this reason, there will be many who will wish to add it to their libraries. The book was not intended as a guide for mycophagists. They should regard it as a supplementary volume because of the absence of many important anatomical details and information about mushroom poisons. In my opinion, the statement in the preface that the book was intended to permit quick identification of species by amateurs is overly optimistic. The abundance of color illustrations and common names will appeal to many casual observers, however.

The book includes a very brief, simplified discussion about the nature of fungi and an explanation of scientific names. Simple words rather than scientific terms are used in a list of macroscopic characters used in identification (unfortunately the caption below the grouped and clumped habits were interchanged). The groups into which the fungi are divided are illustrated by simple line drawings. The photographs, which are ar-